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PROGRAM All Things Considered...

STATION WETA FM
NPR Network

DATE April 22, 1982

5:00 PM

CITY Washington, DC

SUBJECT Schorr's Commentary on Inman

SANFORD UNGAR: Admiral Bobby Inman, the former Director of the National Security Agency announced yesterday that he is retiring as Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Inman, who is 51-years old says he wants to work in the private sector, so he will also retire from the Navy.

Inman was regarded by many people in the Reagan Administration to be too moderate but commentator Daniel Schorr says there may be other reasons for the Admiral's decision.

DANIEL SCHORR: His objections to CIA spying at home into hastily conceived covert operations abroad may have made Admiral Inman seem too liberal for a right-wing Administration. But more to the point was his defense of professionalism against the harnessing of intelligence to ideological purposes.

Inman opposed a Reagan executive order easing restraints on domestic surveillance and breaking less from scruples about civil liberties than a conviction that an intelligence agency functions better under professional discipline.

More recently he was fighting a National Security Council plan to elevate counterintelligence into a separate, centralized agency.

Inman was appalled to find that an avowedly security conscious Administration had no compunction about leaking sensitive intelligence information for political and ideological reasons.